

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for managing telephone calls, comprising:
  - 2 calling a contact;
  - 3 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
  - 4 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using
  - 5 selected interactive voice response algorithms;
  - 6 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of
  - 7 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
  - 8 providing the operator with the textual words.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein calling includes:
  - 2 selecting the contact from a set of contacts within a contact database.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
  - 2 classifying the contact as either a person or not a person; and
  - 3 terminating the call, if the contact is not a person.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein presenting includes:
  - 2 selecting the dialog from a set of dialogs stored in a dialog database based
  - 3 upon a set of attributes associated with the contact.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1:
  - 2 further comprising,
    - 3 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact
    - 4 attributes in a contact database; and
    - 5 wherein providing includes,

6 providing the operator with access to the contact database.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein connecting includes:  
2 continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while  
3 waiting for the human operator to become available.

1 7. The method of claim 1:  
2 further comprising,  
3 determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;  
4 and  
5 wherein connecting includes,  
6 connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:  
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words.

1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:  
2 matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with  
3 interest.

1 10. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:  
2 matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with  
3 disinterest.

1 11. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:  
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words; and

3 concluding that the contact is interested if a greater number of the heuristics  
4 within the set of heuristics indicate the contact's interest.

1 12. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:  
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words;  
3 associating a score with each heuristic;  
4 totaling the scores; and  
5 concluding that the contact is interested if the total score is above a  
6 predetermined threshold.

1 13. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
2 terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

1 14. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
2 performing the translating and determining elements in parallel.

1 15. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
2 performing the determining element after the predetermined portion of the out-  
3 calling dialog with the contact is completed.

1 16. A method for managing telephone calls, comprising:  
2 calling a contact;  
3 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;  
4 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using  
5 selected interactive voice response algorithms;

6 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of  
7 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed;  
8 providing the operator with the textual words;  
9 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a  
10 contact database;  
11 wherein providing includes, providing the operator with access to the contact  
12 database;  
13 determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;  
14 wherein connecting includes, connecting the contact to the operator, if the  
15 contact is interested; and  
16 terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

1 17. A computer-usable medium embodying computer program code for  
2 commanding a computer to manage telephone calls, comprising:  
3 calling a contact;  
4 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;  
5 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using  
6 selected interactive voice response algorithms;  
7 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of  
8 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and  
9 providing the operator with the textual words.

1 18. The medium of claim 17:  
2 further comprising,  
3 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact  
4 attributes in a contact database; and

5           wherein providing includes,

6           providing the operator with access to the contact database.

1   19.   The medium of claim 17 wherein connecting includes:

2           continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while

3           waiting for the human operator to become available.

1   20.   The medium of claim 17:

2           further comprising,

3           determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;

4           and

5           wherein connecting includes,

6           connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

1   21.   A system for managing telephone calls, comprising a:

2           means for calling a contact;

3           means for presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;

4           means for translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual

5           words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;

6           means for connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined

7           portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and

8           means for providing the operator with the textual words.

1   22.   The system of claim 21, further comprising:

2           means for storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact

3           attributes in a contact database.

1 23. The system of claim 21, further comprising:  
2 means for determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling  
3 dialog.

1 24. A system for managing telephone calls between an operator and a contact,  
2 comprising:  
3 a contact database for storing information on the contact;  
4 a dialog database containing a predetermined out-calling dialog;  
5 a call manager for calling the contact and presenting the contact with the  
6 dialog; and  
7 an interactive voice response module for translating the contact's vocal  
8 responses to the dialog into textual words and storing the words in the contact  
9 database which are accessible to the operator.

1 25. The system of claim 24, wherein the contact database includes:  
2 a set of attributes associated with the contact.